

## Kanto Calling

by crywonder

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Summary: Ash isn't the only one who's surprised when he gets a call from Misty at his latest stop in Kalos. And this conversation certainly wasn't what Misty had in mind when she phoned in.

## Kanto Calling

\_This came out of a lot of thinking about the Kalos crew and Ash actually aging and long distance relationships :) I haven't really watched the XY series outside of a few episodes here and there, but I did as much research as I could to make sure I got the characterizations right. I hope it's not out of character!\_

\_Misty - 17

>Ash - nearly 17<br>Serena - 16

>Clemont - 18<br>Bonnie - 6? 7? Brock probably had siblings more than 10 years younger than him this is not weird\_

\* \* \*

><p><em>Laverre City Pok  mon Centre<em>.

If Misty hadn't been quick to get out of the pool to check the new message on her pok  gear, she was fast enough now. She'd barely finished towelling down as she quickly looked up the number to the aforementioned centre, quickly jabbing the number into her gym's videophone.

Misty hadn't had any proper contact with Ash in two months. She knew that neither of them were at fault    calls from Kalos were expensive and Ash was never good with emails, and Misty couldn't possibly know where he was at any given time to call him herself. He sent her the occasional postcard, but it was nothing compared to the

bi-weekly calls they'd done in Unova.

The only reason she'd known today was because of the text from Tracey. The last time Ash had called in, he'd been excited because he finally had the money to call somewhere other than Pallet Town. Misty knew he ended up calling Brock â€" Delia had told him the doctor-in-training had just secured an internship at a PokÃ©mon hospital in Saffron City â€" but Tracey suggested Ash had intended to call Misty at the start. She didn't know if this was just her friend's habit of trying to get them together, but it didn't matter either way. He'd promised to let her know the next time Ash phoned home; this way, Misty could save Ash the money when she initiated the call herself.

She started drying her hair as the phone rang, and a Nurse Joy eventually picked up.

"Laverre City PokÃ©mon Centre!"

"Hi," Misty breathed, still a little out of breath. "Could I speak with Ash Ketchum, please? I was told he's staying here."

"He is!" the nurse nodded, "In fact, I think he just got off another call. Would you like me to put you through?"

"Yes, please!"

"If you'd just hold on for one moment â€¦"

Misty began furiously towelling the ends of her hair as soft music played through the phone's speaker. It wasn't long before Ash's face flickered to life on her screen, a dumbfounded look on his face.

"M-Misty?"

"Hey, Ash!" she smiled, "Long time no see, huh?"

He leaned closer into the camera. "Yeah â€¦ it's been a while."

"Where's Pikachu?"

"Huh? Oh, he's sleeping." He laughed softly. "We've kinda had a long day."

She rolled her eyes. "I'd be worried if you didn't."

"Hi!" Out of nowhere, a little girl with a small side ponytail appeared. "I'm Bonnie! Are you a trainer?"

Misty couldn't stop herself from smiling. On the one email Ash had sent her towards the start of his travels, he'd described all of his friends to her, so she'd heard a thing or two about his youngest companion already â€" along with her zealous attitude towards PokÃ©mon training. "Not quite. I'm Misty, the gym leader of Cerulean City."

"Wow!" Bonnie's eyes sparkled, "A gym leader! My brother's a gym leader too. I'm sure the two of you would really bond over that! Wait

a minute," she stopped, turning to look back at Ash. "Didn't you say you had a gym leader friend?"

"Yep! This is Misty!" Ash confirmed.

"Wow!" Bonnie turned back towards the camera and leaned forward so that her face took up the entire screen. "You're so cool! Ash has told us so much about you and how you keep saving his life! I bet you guys care a lot about each other! You're not Ash's girlfriend, right? Because I really want you to keep my brother. He can't find himself a wife, but he won't have to if you marry him! He needs â€"

This conversation had brought up a million different thoughts that her mind was running through at a hundred miles an hour. Fortunately for her, she'd never have the opportunity to pursue any of them, thanks to â€|

"Bonnie!" A male voice called out, and Misty looked on with horror as robot fingers wrapped themselves around Bonnie's waist and pulled her away. She wasn't sure what to think when the fingers were revealed to be attached to a mechanical arm, which was attached to the back of an older boy who looked a lot like Bonnie. Even more worrying: Ash seemed entirely unfazed.

Misty was sure she'd never met a family this crazy in her entire life. And she knew her \_sisters\_.

The other boy, who she assumed was Clemont, was still talking. "I thought I told you to stop doing that! It's really embarrassing! Look, Miss? I'm really sorry, my sister doesn't mean â€" he leaned down and looked at the monitor, "â€" Oh â€| hi."

"Hey," she waved, "You must be Clemont, right?"

"A-ah, yes!" He pushed his glasses up his nose, and she noted his cheeks were a light shade of pink. "I'm Bonnie's older brother, and gym leader of Lumiose Gym." He glanced down and jumped, and when Misty followed his gaze she noticed Ash giving the older boy a hard glare. "Um, d-don't take my sister seriously. She seems to have decided I need a wife to take care of me, a-and I don't really have a girlfriend, so she â€" look, just pretend it never happened, okay? I don't want to marry you. Not that there's anything wrong with marrying you!" He shot another nervous glance at Ash, "But \_I\_ don't want to marry you. But maybe someone else will!"

Ash had stopped glaring at Clemont, but he was still looking pretty surly. The whole situation had Misty fighting back laughter. "It's okay," she said slowly, "I understand. I'm sure you'll find a â€| suitable wife someday. And Bonnie, you don't have to worry so much." She could only see the girl's legs on the top of the screen, but Misty knew she could hear her. "I'm sure Clemont can take care of himself.

"That'll be the day," Bonnie huffed. "But hey, if you ever change your mind â€|"

"Okay!" Clemont stood up straight, "Bonnie, we're leaving!"

"But I wanna talk to Misty!"

But Clemont was already walking away, carrying Bonnie along with him.

Ash sighed after they left. "I'm sorry about them."

"No, no!" Misty waved the notion away. "Your friends seem lovely. But gee, you sure know how to pick 'em."

He laughed. "Oh yeah! Bonnie and Clemont can be wild, but they're really great."

"I'm sure. Anyway, you did tell me about Bonnie's proposals in your last email. From two months ago."

She watched as a look of pure terror graced his features. Misty was only teasing him, but it was obvious that they weren't on the same wavelength.

"D-did you reply?" he asked gingerly.

"I did. The day after I got it."

"Oh. That's â€¦ gosh, Mist, I'm really sorry â€¦"

She rarely ever heard apologies from him, but she decided to save it for a time when she really deserved one. "I'm not mad at you, Ash. I know it gets hard to keep in touch sometimes. But â€¦" she bit her lip. "I miss you. A-and so does Brock!"

"It's not that I don't remember you guys â€¦"

"We know that." She sighed. "It just â€¦ sucks, you know?"

He reached an arm out, seemingly touching the side of his monitor. "Yeah. It sucks for me too."

As usual, Misty's body betrayed her. She couldn't fight the heat rising to her cheeks no matter how hard she tried, so she looked away, letting her hair hide her face as she reached for the jacket she'd kept on the table beside her. Just as she'd managed to, yet again, convince herself that she was over her feelings for Ash Ketchum and everything was okay, it all came back to bite her on the ass. It was concerning, more than anything. She'd once read somewhere that if you had a crush on someone for more than two years you should see a doctor. Misty had had a crush on Ash since she was ten â€¦ what did that make her?

She had to change the subject. Something completely and entirely platonic that only two people with a completely and entirely platonic relationship would talk about. "So anyway, I got the gift you sent me."

â€¦ Talking about Ash's potential White Day present was not a completely and entirely platonic topic of conversation.

Ash, on the other hand, didn't seem to be suffering from any kind of inner turmoil. "Oh, yeah? I guess I did send it a while back â€¦ did you like it? I saw it at a store and it reminded me of you."

"It â€¦ reminded you of me?"

"Uh huh! And I thought you might like it too."

"I did. I love it." She sucked on her teeth, and looked away again, shrugging her jacket closer over her shoulders. She thought it'd give her the time to think before speaking, but it was obvious her brain just wasn't functioning properly. \_This must be what Ash feels like every day,\_ she thought dryly. "But did you mean for me to get it on White Day?"

There was a pause. "What?"

"I'll take that as a no."

"Wait â€¦ Wh-white Day?" He rubbed the back of his neck. "Gee, Misty, I-I â€¦ I forgot all about that. They don't really celebrate it in Kalos, so I guess â€¦ I just didn't realise it had gone by."

Misty was dismayed, but unsurprised, to find she was actually disappointed. "Huh."

He shifted in his seat. "Did â€¦ did you think it was for White Day?"

"Well, it did arrive \_on\_ White Day." She shrugged, trying to look nonchalant. "And it's a pendant."

"â€¦ It is?"

And there it was â€" that familiar surge of annoyance, twitch of her eyebrow and flare of his nostrils. A conversation with Ash Ketchum about romance was always easy bait for her temper.

"Yes, Ash, it was a pendant. It came on a chain." She reached into the pocket of her jacket and pulled out the item in question. It was a gold copy of a Staryu's core, with a small ruby in the middle to complete the piece. Neither the gold nor the ruby felt real, but Misty hardly cared; the thought was still sweet. At the time. "What else could you possibly think this is?"

His brow was furrowed as he stared at it, scratching his head. "Actually, it didn't have a chain when I saw it. I figured it was a badge or something."

Misty slapped a palm to her forehead. "Of course you did."

"Why are you so worked up about this anyway?"

She jumped. "I-I'm not worked up! I was just curious. The timing had me wondering â€¦ but then again, it was from \_you\_, and I never sent you anything for Valentine's Day, so why would you â€" "

"What are you talking about? You sent me those chocolates, didn't you?"

Now it was Misty's turn to be confused. "I did?"

"Yeah! You sent them to Shalour City, right?"

He'd thought those chocolates were from \_her\_. "Ash, those were from

your mother!"

"They were?"

She laughed, "Yeah, doofus! I was in Pallet Town then, so I sent a letter with it."

"I wondered why those chocolates tasted so familiar. I was surprised you could make anything taste so good."

"Hey!"

Ash grinned. "Face it, Misty, your cooking â€"

"Anyway," she pressed on, "You reached Shalour City on Valentine's Day?"

"A few days after. But the Nurse Joy there said that was when it arrived." He cleared his throat. "And, uh, winked."

Misty made sure her face was carefully void of expression. "Well I certainly hadn't intended for it to arrive then."

He threw her a sheepish grin. "So we're even, right?"

"Sure." She started to return the smile, but stopped. Valentine's Day was just over a month ago. "Hold on a second â€| you thought those chocolates were from me â€|"

"Yeah â€|"

"Because â€| because they arrived on \_Valentine's Day\_ â€|"

"â€| Yes â€|"

"And you didn't think to call or message me to clarify this â€| at all?"

"Uhhhhhh â€|"

"Ash?" Misty heard a voice she couldn't recognise, followed by one of the prettiest girls she'd ever seen. "Pikachu's awake, and â€" She peered down into the screen. "Oh â€| hello. I don't think I've seen your face before."

"This is Misty. She's the gym leader of Cerulean City." Misty couldn't help but beam at the obvious pride in his voice. "Misty, this is Serena."

"Hey," Misty smiled. Ash had told her all about Serena too, and how she 'blushes a lot and asks a lot of questions, but she's still pretty cool'. Even halfway across the world, Misty could tell this girl obviously had a huge thing for Ash. Fighting any feelings of jealousy that were threatening to surface, she smiled wider, "It's nice to meet you."

"Oh! You're the water PokÃ©mon master, aren't you? It's an honour to meet you."

She coughed, not quite expecting that introduction. Obviously Serena

hadn't caught onto Ash's tendency to exaggerate about his friends' achievements. "Oh, I don't think I'm a \_master\_ just yet â€| "

"You've done so much for your gym," Ash shrugged, "The way I see it, you might as well be."

Six years ago, Ash wouldn't be caught dead saying anything like this. Misty didn't even know this was the impression he was giving his friends until she'd heard it from Max when he'd visited Kanto before Ash headed out to the Battle Frontier. She'd brushed it off then, thinking the boy had been swayed by her Gyarados and there was no way Ash thought \_that\_ highly of her, but she was forced to believe when she finally heard the same thing from Dawn. Ash's calls had only come every few weeks in Sinnoh, and he was almost always alone, but she finally met Dawn when the girl called the gym up herself, asking her for advice on raising her Piplup â€" "because a few days ago Ash told me you knew everything about water pokÃ©mon there is to know, and I wanted to see what you thought about this thing I'm trying to do with his bubblebeam attack â€| "

In any case, Misty saw this as evidence that Ash had matured a bit over time, and she was glad for it. But that didn't mean she knew how to deal with his compliments.

Serena must've sensed Misty's awkwardness, because she spoke up. "Well, this is lovely, but Ash and I have to get dinner." She placed her hands on her hips, "Clemont says it'll get cold if you don't come soon, so you should probably wrap it up."

"Alright," Ash nodded, glancing briefly back at the screen, "Could you â€| uh, give us a few minutes?"

"Sure. Want me to send Pikachu over?"

"Oh, yes please!" Misty piped up, "I haven't seen the little guy in so long!"

Serena grinned. "Alright." She placed a hand on Ash's shoulder, and Misty winced â€" the gesture felt intimate, leaving Misty questioning just how far their relationship had progressed since Ash's last letter. "Don't be too long."

Misty eyed the blonde as she left the room, leaving her and Ash alone. "She's pretty."

"I guess," Ash frowned, "I haven't really thought about it â€| but I think she has to know how to look pretty, since she's a PokÃ©mon Performer and all."

"A PokÃ©mon Performer?"

"Yeah! Didn't I tell you about that?" Ash rubbed his nose, "I guess I never had the opportunity to. She decided she wants to compete in PokÃ©mon showcases. Kinda like coordinating, but there's no battling and the trainers have to perform too."

Misty hummed, resting her chin on her fist. "I guess you'd have to know how to look good for that. But she's a natural kind of pretty too, you know? I bet she looks nice all the time."

He gave her a funny look. "Do you like her, or something?"

Shocked, she nearly fell out of her seat. "Wh-wha â€"?! Like? H-how do you mean?"

"You know, like â€| 'like' like. Because if you do, you know I'll always support you no matter what â€|"

"Ash â€| are you asking me if I like girls?"

He blinked. "I'm just asking you if you like Serena."

"â€| Serena â€|"

"You, uh â€| you might have a chance, you know. She acts really weird every time this other girl, Miette is around, kind of like â€| uh, never mind. But I think she likes girls too."

"â€| Are you \_serious\_?"

"Oh, yeah! Miette's her rival, and she doesn't really have any concept of personal space, and Serena gets all flustered. I can tell because that's how Dawn's Buneary used to be around Pikachu. Actually, I didn't realise that was why Buneary was acting weird until Brock told me last year â€""

"No, I mean â€| are you seriously trying to hook me up with another girl?!"

"â€|Oh." Ash suddenly looked very bashful, eyes darting everywhere except at the screen in front of him. "So you don't â€|? That's â€| good. Uhm â€|" He shifted in his seat, "So â€| just to clarify, you don't like girls at all?"

"\_No.\_ Ash, you can't just assume someone likes someone because they think they're good-looking. That's not how it works."

"It doesn't? But I thought â€|" he trailed off, brow furrowed in thought.

"Attraction isn't always just about looks, you know."

He shook his head. "No, I get that. But don't you only find someone pretty if you â€| if you like them?"

Misty frowned. "What do you mean?"

Ash didn't say anything. Half a minute of silence later, Misty decided she was never going to get an answer. She racked her brain, once again, for something else to talk about, when a blur of yellow leaped onto Ash's lap.

"Pikachupi!" Pikachu cried.

"Pikachu!" Misty laughed, thankful for the distraction. "I missed you too, pal. You're taking good care of Ash for me, right?"

The rodent chattered excitedly, and Misty looked away from briefly to notice Ash with a small smile on his face as he watched Pikachu

recount the events of the day. Her heart clenched; Ash alone had been great, but he wasn't quite complete without his constant companion. And she'd missed this dearly.

Pikachu was interrupted when Ash's stomach let out an all too familiar grumble. He laughed nervously as both Misty and the pok  mon rolled their eyes.

"Wanna wrap it up, buddy?" Ash patted Pikachu's head, "We don't want to be late for dinner."

At that, Pikachu's own stomach let out a low grumble that left the humans chuckling.

"Alright, alright," Misty tucked a strand of hair behind her ear. "I'll let you go."

Ash looked apologetic. "We didn't really get to talk much, but â  "

She waved him away. "It's alright, I'm not about to get in between you and food."

"I'll call you. Next gym. I should be there in a month, or so."

"You don't have to, Ash. It's a lot of money â  "

"I'll save up for it." He leaned closer, clutching Pikachu in his arms. "I'll sell something. I didn't even get to ask you how your gym's going, and I haven't introduced you to Frogadier yet!"

"Pika-pika!"

"Ash!" Bonnie came running into the room, grabbing his arm and pulling him away from the seat, "I've already finished eating and you're not even here! What's taking you so long?"

Ash glanced at Misty from the corner of his eye, and Misty gestured at pushing him away. "Go on!"

"Next gym." He got out of his seat but leaned down so he could still be seen on the screen. "I promise."

She nodded. "I'll hold you to it."

"Let's go!" Bonnie yanked at Ash's arm, jerking him forward as Pikachu struggled to scamper onto his shoulder.

"Slow down, Bonnie, I can't leave without hanging u  "

The camera flickered off as the call ended, leaving Misty alone in a corridor of her gym. A few minutes later she was back in the pool, doing laps with her pok  mon with a lot more zeal than before â   now, at least, she knew that she'd be seeing Ash again soon.

End  
file.